



The Task Force on Court Facilities
455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102-3660

Standards and Evaluation Committee
Meeting Report
March 24, 1999
Holiday Inn, Fresno CA

TASK FORCE ATTENDEES: Mr. Anthony Tyrrell (1 st half) Mr. Greg Abel (1 st half) Hon. Charles Smith (1 st half) Hon. Diane Wick (1 st half) COMMITTEE MEMBERS: PRESENT: Hon. Wayne Peterson, Chair Sheriff Robert Doyle Hon. Gary Freeman Mr. Mike Courtney Hon. Michael E. Nail ABSENT: Hon. Martha Escutia	PRESENTERS: Mr. Dan Smith, Daniel C. Smith & Associates/Vitetta Group TASK FORCE STAFF: Mr. Bruce Newman, Administrative Office of the Courts CONSULTANTS TO THE TASK FORCE: Mr. Dan Smith, Daniel C. Smith & Associates/Vitetta Group Ms. Kathy Bruns, Daniel C. Smith & Associates/Vitetta Group Cathy Chynoweth, Daniel C. Smith & Associates/Vitetta Group Kathleen Halaszinski, Daniel, Mann, Johnson, & Mendenhall Mr. Don Dwore, Spillis Candella Partners Mr. Ken Jandura, Spillis Candella Partners GUESTS: Ms. Sue Bost, Department of Finance, State of California Hon. Stephen Dombrink, Alameda County Superior Court
--	---

I. Morning Session (March 24, 1999 - 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.)

- 1) The committee was presented with updates on the status of working groups they chartered. Written reports from working group meetings were distributed.
 - a) Appellate Court Standards: Ms. Bost gave a summary of the Department of Finance's capital outlay process that was presented at the working group meeting held in Riverside.
 - (1) Judge Peterson asked that the working group study "stand alone" Appellate Court Facilities verses courts sharing space with other organizations, such as trial courts. He noted that the finance committee will have to look at the financing of combined trial court and appellate court facilities.
 - b) Unification: Judge Steven Dombrink presented some highlights from the past court unification working group meeting which included:
 - (1) defining access to court facilities including the location and services provided by the courts.
 - (2) a presentation by Dr. Nyberg, Mayor of Fortuna, on the affect of unification on Fortuna's courts.
 - (3) Mr. Abel suggested that the group examine how unification relates to the responsibilities of the Needs Analysis and Projection Committee.
 - (4) Mr. Smith noted that there are 393 separate court facilities in California with 100-150 designated as community courts which are used only a couple days a week. Some court sessions

- are even held in small community buildings such as public libraries. The Task Force is charged with determining the optimum judicial resources required for a given county.
- c) Security: Mr. Smith reported that the Security Working Group's first meeting was postponed until March 31, 1999 due to illness of a key staff member.
 - 2) The committee reviewed the County Law Library Association's request to be included as a court function in the Task Force's study. The committee decided to make the following two recommendations to the Task Force:
 - a) County law libraries are not court functions and should not be included in the Task Force's scope of work.
 - b) The guidelines should recommend co-locating the county law libraries with the courts and that sufficient space be provided in the courthouse, as permitted by budget. This recognizes the need for libraries' services and their important relationship with the court.

II. Afternoon Session (March 24, 1999 - 1:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

- 1) Mr. Robert Lloyd gave a brief update on the actives of the Technology Working Group.
- 2) Kim Steinjann's conversation with Mr. Michael Mankin, Office of the State Architect, concerning accessibility to the courtroom bench was discussed. Mr. Mankin's position is that the bench is a public place and should be made accessible to all. The committee feels that it is not a public space since it's used only by judges. Several people discussed experiences with having to make the bench comply with Title 24/American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Some had to make the total facility comply; others had only to make part of facility compliant. The committee asked the question: if all benches have to comply how does this affect historic courtrooms and the 15 one-room courthouses?
 - a) The committee asked staff to verify the specific courtroom accessibility requirements with the State Architect and determine if Mr. Mankin's position is an interpretation of the law or an express requirement.
 - b) The Standards Committee decided to recommend to the Task Force that the courtroom bench be designed and built in accordance with ADA requirements.
- 3) Mr. Dan Smith presented the guideline recommendations for Section IV: Judicial Officer's Suite, Section V: Jury Assembly Area, and Section VI: Court Reporter Area.
 - a) The use of the words "should", "will", "shall" and "must" was discussed. Dan will eliminate all "musts" and "shalls" because they imply that the document is a "standard" (requirement) as opposed to a "guideline" (recommendation).
 - b) Judge Peterson noted the Mr. Ming Yim, San Diego Superior Court's in-house architect, reviewed the draft. Judge Peterson will provide Mr. Smith with his detailed comments.
 - c) The committee recommended the following changes to the courtroom guideline:
 - (1) Court reporter should not be elevated. His/her work station should be mobile so that it can be moved around to hear better based on who is talking.
 - (2) 4" privacy screen at the bench is too high, use no more than 3".
 - (3) Railing should be no more than 33" high. 36" is too high.
 - (4) Section 9 on accessibility and the section on communications should be rewritten as a checklist and not appear as a mandate.
 - (5) No more than 8 courtrooms should be located on single floor.
 - d) The committee recommended the following changes to the Jury Deliberation Room, which is a new section in this issue.
 - (1) A one to one ratio between jury deliberation rooms and courtrooms is not necessary in multi-courtroom courthouses.
 - (2) More toilet rooms are needed, since all jurors seem want to use them at the same time.
 - (3) Mr. Smith stated that round tables function better in jury deliberation rooms.
 - (a) Mr. Smith stated that 300 net square feet may be a little large. Mr. Dwore said lots of jurors complain that the rooms are too small. The size was not resolved.
 - e) Chapter IV: Judicial Officer Suite was discussed next. Mr. Smith stated that all possibilities were addressed in the standard, noting that the use of specific elements will vary between courthouses based upon their organization and staffing. The following comments/changes were offered:

- (1) Judge Peterson stated that the type of calendaring system used (direct, indirect or master) will impact the design of the judicial officer's suite. The calendaring system influences how a court functions which will determine how the guidelines are applied.
- (2) Should be a conference/law library for 10 – 12 judges. About 400SF. Consider having more than one since more will be needed as judges are added and the rooms can be used for other activities such as settlement conferences. No more than one per floor is needed.
- (3) Part 1 Area Description and Size, Items a – h - develop a matrix for variations in space size.
- (4) Part 3 Security, Part 4 Design Characteristics & Part 5 Acoustics – consider a specification instead of guidelines since many court facilities are design/build.
- f) Chapter V: Jury Assembly Area is written to include small to large courthouses. The following comments/changes were offered:
 - (1) The guideline needs to discuss when different jury assembly area elements would be used in courthouse design based upon the size of the court.
 - (2) Televisions should be included.
- 4) **Miscellaneous:**
 - a) The next issue of the guidelines will be a “working” draft instead of a “preliminary” draft.
 - b) The committee thinks it's going in the right direction. Judge Nail would like square footages. Mr. Smith thinks a matrix will help with this.
 - c) The committee asked if the guidelines need to be published on July 1? If so, will it be draft document?
 - (1) Mr. Freeman made it very clear that the guidelines are a working document that will be sent to counties and other interested parties for review and comment. The July 1 submission is a “preliminary” determination of acceptable court standards, not a final product. It is a work in progress and will not be finalized until near the end of the Task Force's work.